

Selected Response Assessments

Steps to Creating Efficient and High-Fidelity Assessment

Step 1: Build a blueprint from standards, curriculum, and what you will teach; create a table of test specifications. You may alternately create a list of achievement standards or learning targets.

Content	Knowledge and Understanding	Comparative Reasoning	Classification Reasoning	Total
Alternative Forms of Government	9 questions	5	1	15
Structure of U.S. Government	4	5	1	10
Rights and Responsibilities of Citizens	7	5	3	15
Total	20	15	5	40

The total number of questions in each column and row should represent how much time is dedicated to studying each content area and reasoning skill

“This method can come into play when your instruction is focusing on standards or classroom learning targets that center on **foundations of knowledge** or some **reasoning** proficiencies.” - Stiggins

Step 2: Select material, and build propositions based on your blueprint

- Create a list of statements: core pieces of foundational knowledge
- Propositions for reasoning should require extrapolation -- students must go beyond retrieving a simple piece of information

Example: “Three common forms of government are monarchies, dictatorships, and democracies.”

Step 3: Build test items from propositions

- Take the better half of your propositions and turn them into exam questions
- Types of test items
 - True/False
 - Fill in
 - Multiple Choice
 - Matching
- Write very clearly, in simple language to prevent literacy bias.

Strive for clarity and simplicity. There should only be one possible answer.

Summary of the Steps for Building a Selected Response Assessment

Selected Response can assess five types of reasoning: analysis, synthesis, comparison, classification, inference

Step 1: Preparing a Blueprint

The first step in selected response assessment development is to formulate a blueprint. An effective blueprint requires a clear understanding of the material you expect your students to master. Because of this, any blueprint should be organized based upon the type of reasoning you intend to test students on. To do this, Stiggins suggests creating a table, best exemplified by Table 5.2 (**pg. 105**). The difference in the number of test items assigned to each content category varies based upon the amount of instructional time spent on each category, the amount of material in each category, the relative importance of material in each category for later learning, or the important relationships among various ideas. Ultimately, while preparing a blueprint may feel time consuming, it allows you to focus instruction, provide students with a clear outline of testable material, and speeds up later steps in the selected response creation process.

Step 2: Selecting the Specific Material to Assess

To begin Step 2 you must select the specific and individual elements of knowledge and reasoning from which you will build test items. These elements are likely to be broken into conceptual and factual pieces of information and should align closely with your classroom achievement targets. Next, capture the elements you wish to test in the form of clearly stated sentences that reflect important elements of content and stipulate the kind of cognitive operation respondents must carry out. These sentences are called propositions. If you hope to assess student reasoning, it is important to create propositions that reflect important learnings that have not explicitly been covered in class (for examples see **pg. 112**). For each test item planned, Stiggins recommends creating two propositions. So, if you have an assessment with 40 test items, Stiggins recommends creating 80 propositions. While this may feel like a time-consuming process, once the propositions are created most of the assessment development process is finished. Once propositions have been made, select the propositions that you feel best address key areas of content.

Step 3: Building Test Items from Propositions

Now that your propositions have been created they can be easily altered to formulate test items. Stiggins breaks selected response into four categories: multiple choice, true/false, matching, and short answer fill-in. He provides clear examples of how to change a proposition into a test item on **pg. 115**. Regardless of the item format, clarity and focused simplicity should be key traits of each test item. You should always try to ask questions, attempt to eliminate inappropriate clues to the correct answer, seek one clearly correct answer, and ask colleagues to review your tests. For specific advice regarding the four categories of selected response items, see **pgs. 117-120**.